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however, he established for these strange beings a distinct sub-kingdom, the Mesozoa. It has been the general opinion, however, that they are degraded Platyelminth worms.

After an elaborate study of different species of this group, Professor Whitman considers their reproduction, embracing the phenomena of transition from the rhombogenic to the nematogenic condition, a comparison of the Dicyemidæ with the Orthonectidæ, and a general survey of their evolutionary cycle, so far as at present known. He then examines the development of the vermiform embryo, and the origin of the germ-cells, with remarks on endogenous cell-formation. Finally he discusses the systematic affinities of the Dicyemids. Whitman sees "no reasons for doubting the general opinion that they are Platyhelminths degraded by parasitism. Whether they and their allies, the Orthonectidæ, have descended from ancestors represented now by such forms as *Dinophilus* (Metschnikoff), or from the Trematoda (Leuckart), is a question which further investigations must decide," also remarking that "when we find an animal in the form of a simple sack, filled with reproductive elements, secured by position against enemies, supplied with food in abundance and combining parasitism with immobility, we have strong reasons for believing that the simplicity of its structure is more or less the result of the luxurious conditions of life which it enjoys, even if its development furnishes no positive evidence of degeneration."

VERRILL'S CATALOGUE OF NEW ENGLAND MARINE MOLLUSKS.¹—This is intended to include all the mollusca now known to inhabit the New England region that are not included in Binney's edition of Gould's *Invertebrata* of Massachusetts, published in 1870. The illustrations are noteworthy, not only from the beauty and evident accuracy of the drawings which have been made by Mr. Emerton, but from the perfection and cheapness of cost of the photo-lithographic work.

BARRANDE'S SILURIAN ACEPHALOUS MOLLUSKS.²—In a thick octavo volume with ten plates, M. Barrande has given the results of his exhaustive studies of the genera of Silurian *Acephala* of Bohemia, of the vertical distribution of the genera and species, their variations and the specific connections established between the Bohemian forms and those of other countries.

BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY. —With the purchase of the Hall collection of New York fossils, and the accumulation or deposit of other material, and the accession of working scientists to its force, the American Museum

¹*Catalogue of Marine Mollusca added to the Fauna of New England during the past ten years.* By A. E. VERRILL. (From the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy, Vol. v. Part 2.) New Haven, April to July, 1882. 8vo, 5 plates.

²*Acephales. Etudes locales et comparatives. Extraits du système Silurien du Centre de la Bohême.* Vol. VI. Acéphalés. Par JOACHIM BARRANDE. Prague et Paris, 1881. 8vo, p. 536.

of Natural History occupies a more substantial basis than before as an active scientific institution, advancing as well as diffusing natural knowledge. The numbers thus far published are solid additions to biology and would do credit to any institution. The articles are thus far all by Mr. R. P. Whitfield, the able curator of palæontology, and refer to the palæozoic fossils of New York, Iowa, Indiana and Illinois, besides his "Description of *Limnæa megasoma*, with an account of changes produced in the offspring by unfavorable conditions of life." The partly colored plate illustrating this essay, is a beautiful one. The most valuable palæontological paper is Mr. Whitfield's observations on the purpose of the embryonic sheaths of Endoceras, and their bearing on the origin of the siphon in the Orthocerata.

EMERTON'S NEW ENGLAND SPIDERS¹.—This brochure contains descriptions of the New England species of the family Therididæ, and is illustrated with twenty-four excellent photo-lithographic plates. These spiders are small and slender, spinning webs, often of large size, and living in them, hanging by their claws, back downward, and catching and eating the insects which become entangled among the threads. In many species the colors are plain, without any markings on the legs or abdomen. The amount of color varies greatly in individuals of the same species of certain genera; some being nearly white, and others nearly black. In other genera, the colors are bright and distinct. In most of the species there is considerable difference between the sexes, the males having the abdomen smaller, the legs longer, and the head higher than the females. Many details are given on the plates of the palpi, eyes, etc.

LACAZE-DUTHIERS' HISTORY OF LAURA GERARDIÆ.²—This elegant volume is devoted to the morphology, histology and developmental history of a singular crustacean which is parasitic on a coral. The work is a worthy successor of the richly illustrated monographs which the gifted author has successively given to the world, a series beginning with his treatise on the morphology of the ovipositor of insects, and containing those on Dentalium, the red coral and other important types. The illustrations are drawn by the author, whose facile use of the pencil is only equaled by his power with the scalpel, and we may add, the injecting syringe—the French anatomists excelling, we think, in making delicate injections of minute animals.

Laura is a parasitic crustacean, which externally is kidney-shaped and covered over by a growth of polyps of the antipatharian coral Gerardia. The body of the crustacean is covered by a

¹From the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. VI. 1882. 8vo, p. 86.

²*Histoire de la Laura gerardiæ, type nouveau de Crustacé parasite.* Par H. DE LACAZE-DUTHIERS. *Institute de France, Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences, Extrait du Tome XLII.* Paris, 1882. 4to, p. 160, 8 plates.